**2026 UYFC - RULES**

**Game Length and Timing:**

1st & 2nd Grade, 3rd Grade, 4th Grade, 5th Grade, 6th Grade, 7th Grade & 8th Grade (16 min running clock quarters).
9th Grade (12 min quarters as per high school timing rules. Clock will start on the ready-for-play after a change of possession).

Half-time: Half-time will be six minutes for 1st grade through 8th grade. Half-time will be 10 minutes for 9th grade.

The clock will stop for the last 2 minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters as per high school rules.
The 1st-6th Grade divisions will have 30 seconds to snap the ball after the read for play signal.
The 7th-8th Grade divisions will have 25 seconds to snap the ball after the ready for play signal.
The 9th Grade division will use the NFHS 40 second clock rule.

Each team will have three time-outs per half. The clock will run through time-outs (unless it is during the last two-minutes of the half or is a 9th grade game).

Mercy Rule:

1st – 8th grade: If a team is ahead by 28 points when there are two minutes remaining in the game, the clock will be stopped as per rule. However, the clock will start when the ball is placed ready for play. The team ahead will not be allowed to take a time-out. The team behind will be granted time-outs.

9th grade: If a team is ahead by 35 points in the second half there will be a running clock (as per UHSAA clock rules). If a team is ahead by 45 points after the 3rd quarter the game will end.

**Field length:**

1st through 7th grade play on an 80-yard field.
8th and 9th grade play on a 100-yard field.

**Free kicks, Scrimmage kicks, & Extra points:**

**Kick-Offs/Free Kick after a Safety**

1st & 2nd Grade there will be no kick offs. Offense will start with the ball on the 20 yard line.

All other grades will kick off on an 80-yard field from the 30-yard line and on a 100-yard field from the 40-yard line.

A free kick after a safety will be placed on the 15-yard line on an 80-yard field and 20-yard line on a 100-yard field.

Kick-out-of-bounds: Receiving team has three options

1. Re-kick with the ball kicked 5-yards from the previous spot
2. Take ball at the out-of-bounds spot PLUS 5-yards
3. Take ball 20 yards from the kick (80-yard field) or 25 yards from the kick (100-yard field)

**Scrimmage kicks:**

1st-4th Grades must declare intentions to punt, regardless of the down. The offense is allowed a free kick if electing to punt – no rushing the punter. All players remain still until the ball is punted.

5th-9th Grades will play according to regular High School rules.

**Field Goals** are limited to 8th & 9th Grade teams only.

**PAT's**

A team will receive one (1) point for conversion from the 1.5-yard line and two (2) points for conversion from the 3-yard line.

8th-9th Grade teams may kick a PAT if they are on a field with a goal post (The ball will be placed on the 3-yard line:

Live rush is allowed on a kick for a PAT. 2 points will be scored if the ball is carried into the end-zone.

**Tie Game – Tie Breaker:** In the event of a tie, a winner will be determined using the NFHS overtime rule.

1. Teams will flip a coin at the beginning of the overtime. The winning team can choose to play offense first or defense. Each team will get equal opportunities to score.
    a. Regular rules (including the play clock rules) apply during overtime.
    b. Each team will be given one series of downs.
    c. All Grades will start with the ball on the 10-yard line for the 1st and if needed the 2nd overtime.

d. Teams must attempt a two-point conversion in the second overtime. Any subsequent overtimes teams will only attempt a two-point conversion.
e. Each team will have 1 timeout each overtime period.

**Special League Rules:**

**X-man Rule – Offense:**

X-men may only be an interior lineman (center, guard, tackle). They cannot line up in a position where they are an eligible receiver. An X-man my recover and advance a fumble on offense.

No more than five X-men may be on the Offensive side of the ball.

NOTE: plays designed to get the ball to an X-man will be blown dead.

**X-man Rule – Defense:**

X-men may play any position on Defense. They may advance both fumbles and interceptions. There is no limit to the number of X-men on Defense.

**X-man Rule – Special Teams:**

X-men must be on the front two lines on the receiving team for free kicks (They must be within 10-yards of the receiving line.

X-men must be within 10 yards of the line of scrimmage for all scrimmage kicks (punt and PAT).

X-men may punt the ball. However, they cannot fake punt or advance the ball.

NOTE: No more than five X-men may be on the field by either team on a kick-off.

**Protecting the Center & Blitzing:**

1st-4th Grades teams cannot cover the center at any time. There can be no nose guard or linebacker lined up at the line of scrimmage. Linebackers cannot blitz the A-gap. Violation of this rule will be treated as a dead ball procedure foul. Defense must be HEAD up on the Guard. The Defensive lineman over the guard may rush the A or B gap. D-line man must start in a 3 or 4 point stance. Linebackers must start 3 yards off the ball. They may step up to stop run in the A-Gap.

Violation of this rule will result in a dead ball foul and a 5-yard penalty with a replay of the down.

5th-9th Grades – no restrictions on blitzing

**Penalties and Rule Book:**

Penalties in the conference will be per the NFHS (National Federation of High School Associations) playing rules.

The official rulebook for conducting all games shall be the NFHS rule book. This shall be superseded by written rules of the UYFC which conflict with it. In these cases, UYFC rules will be followed.
Maximum yardage penalty on an 80-yard field will be 10-yards from the enforcement spot.

**Illegal equipment:** Player must leave for one play to remove illegal equipment The head coach will NOT be assessed a UNS.

**Legal Equipment worn improperly:** Player must immediately fix problem – if unable to do so immediately, the player must leave for one play (pants cover knees, mouthpiece, etc).

**Coaching Help:**

1st-4th Grades – One coach from each team can be on the field. Coaches can call offensive and defensive plays in the huddle but must stay back out of the way after the huddle breaks. As soon as the quarterback is in position to receive the snap, the coaches on the field must be back at least fifteen (15) yards and they cannot communicate with the players until the play is over. Coach changes can only be made during time-outs or changes in possession.
Violation of the rule will result in a warning for the first offense and an unsportsmanlike penalty for additional offenses.

**Unsportsmanlike Behavior by Parent or fan:**

When a parent/fan is behaving in an unsportsmanlike manner, the official will notify the head coach. The head coach will be responsible for taking care of the parents. If the problem continues an unsportsmanlike penalty will be assessed to the team. When a Coach, parent or player is ejected, the player associated with said person is also to leave the field. Both are disqualified from the game and sideline. The next game the player will miss the first half, and the adult will be suspended for the entire game. The only exception to this rule is the head coach's son. If the head coach is ejected, the player may remain in the game.